

Published: Nov. 23, 2014, Kokomo Tribune [Page: A4]

http://www.kokomotribune.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-pence-checks-all-the-boxes/article_400120f4-7328-11e4-9154-f7a0d3dd4299.html?mode=print

Editorial: Pence checks all the boxes

President Barack Obama Thursday decided to protect around 5 million undocumented immigrants from deportation. In response, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence joined a handful of Republican governors in the search for legal remedies to combat the move.

“Pence spokeswoman Christy Denault said Thursday that the governor’s office was consulting with Attorney General Greg Zoeller and will consider further steps after Obama issues his executive order,” reported The Associated Press Thursday. “Pence joins Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and Texas Gov. Rick Perry in announcing they are considering lawsuits against Obama.”

Those last two names should ring some bells with those tracking the likely GOP candidates for president in the 2016 election. As we’ve written in previous editorials, the buzz surrounding Pence’s name as a possible Republican contender has only grown as of late.

“Pence should run for president because ‘he’s got the record and got the experience’ to be a strong candidate in 2016, said conservative media mogul Steve Forbes,” reported the Indianapolis Business Journal Nov. 13. “‘Why shouldn’t he look at it?’ Forbes said after interviewing Pence for an

hour on stage at a Forbes Reinventing America summit in Indianapolis. ‘He knows what it takes to get things done. He brings the legislative perspective, the executive perspective and the principled perspective, and it’s a good combination.’”

When asked of his intentions, Pence has been vague, saying he would make a final decision after the next legislative session has concluded. Meanwhile, he has been steadily shoring up support from conservatives for his party-approved positions on abortion, gay marriage, Common Core and right-to-work, among others. His popularity in the state hasn’t hurt his chances much either.

“WISH-TV/Ball State Hoosier Survey [shows] most Hoosiers think he’s doing a good job,” reported WISH-TV Nov. 12. “The governor’s approval rating is 62 percent. ... The Hoosier Survey also found that more people have heard good things about Pence than any other potential GOP candidate for president for 2016. More than half said there is some chance they would vote for [him.]”

Theoretical rivals for the nomination have their bases of support, but they also have their drawbacks: Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul has presented himself as a dovish isolationist who supports ending the war on drugs. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie has been mired in scandals from “Bridgegate” to his forced Ebola quarantine. Texas Sen. Ted Cruz appeals to the tea party wing of the party, but turns off traditional GOP stalwarts.

Given this field, a button-down, old-school candidate like Pence, who has the potential to build a wide base of support in the party, would be pretty hard to beat.